

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI R.L. JALAPPA): (a) The Cotton Advisory Board in its meeting on 24.2.97 has estimated the current crop size to be 160 lakh bales. Daily arrivals of cotton in the market are heavy. Government released substantial export quotas early in the season and even subsequently, in order that there may not be piling of stocks, particularly in view of relatively slow demand for cotton from mills.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No target is set for export of cotton by the Government. However, export quotas for cotton are announced by the Government after taking into consideration all relevant factors, including estimates of production, availability, consumption likely surplus, price trends, etc. No export quota is released to the State Governments. However, an export quota of 12.20 lakh bales of cotton has been released to various State Federations and other agencies during the current cotton season 1996-97 as on date.

Tariff Commission

1245. SHRI SARAT PATTANAYAK : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are considering to set up a Tariff Commission to examine tariff reforms;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Government has decided on establishment of an autonomous Tariff Commission under the Ministry of Industry. Government have also decided to refer the matter pertaining to the terms of reference for the Commission to the Committee of Secretaries.

(c) Does not arise.

ODA from Japan

1246. SHRI S.D.N.R. WADIYAR :

SHRI MANIKRAO HODLYA GAVIT :

SHRI MANIBHAI RAMJIBHAI CHAUDHARI :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are getting Official Development Agency (ODA) assistance from Japan for 11 projects;

(b) if so, what are those projects;

(c) the total amount of ODA assistance likely to be obtained from Japan in financial year 1997/98;

(d) whether similar loan was taken by the Government in the financial year 1996-97; and

(e) if so, for which projects and the progress of these projects as on date?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR) : (a) and (b) The Government of Japan is providing Official Development Assistance (ODA) to the Government of India for the following 11 projects during 1996-97 :

(Yen Mill.)

1. Northern India Transmission System Project	8,497
2. West Bengal Transmission System Project	11,087
3. Umiam Hydro Power Station Renovation Project	1,700
4. Tuirial Hydro-Electric Power Station Project	11,695
5. Simhadri Thermal Power Station Project	19,817
6. Delhi Mass Rapid Transport System Project	14,760
7. Calcutta Transport Infrastructure Development Project	10,679
8. Eastern Karnataka Afforestation Project	15,968
9. Tamil Nadu Afforestation Project	13,324
10. Kerala Water Supply Project	11,997
11. Rajghat Canal Irrigation Project	13,222

(c) The total amount of ODA likely to be made available by Government of Japan to Government of India for the financial year 1997-98 is not known.

(d) As at (a and b) above.

(e) Loan agreements for the 11 projects have been signed on 25.2.1997.

Waiver of Loans of CIL

1247. SHRI JAGMOHAN : Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) whether any proposal has been made by Coal India Ltd. for waiver of the huge tax payment in the form of 'grants' or 'loans';

(b) if so, the details of the plan; and

(c) the reaction of the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise in view of the answer to part (a) above.

Duty Evasion

1248. SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL :

SHRI RAMSAGAR :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state

(a) whether the adjudicating authority of the Customs Department has taken seven years to complete the hearing on the alleged evasion of duty by the Reliance Industries Ltd. (RIL) and has asked the Company to pay Rs. 16.4 crore excise duty payable for removing partially-oriented yarn (POY) from its Patalganga plant;